

Contributors

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Poetry

Ron Androla

Robert Bohm

Pris Campbell

Michael-Earle Carlton

AnnMarie Eldon

John Korn

Bob Marcacci

Alveraz Ricardez

Diego Quiros

Interview

Grace Cavalieri with Ken Flynn

Visuals

Sina Queyras

Ken Flynn

Cover Art by Didi Menendez

8

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PROMISES FOREVER, BUT NEVER

Father promised to give you flowers, but gave none. Nor diamonds, or seed pearls he spoke of, to be formed into a bracelet to fit your tiny wrist. The only jewelry you wore, given by him, was a thin unadorned wedding band; never complaining when it turned your fingers grayish-green. He brazenly showered you with rare, perfumed scents, carried back from the beds of his other women, sharing only harsh anger in those years spent together; saving softly whispered phrases of praise for those same other women; tokens never awarded you as wife, or mother. When you died, he chose a simple, wooden casket for burial, which only he and I attended. I brought along your favourite flower, a single, yellow rose. Without asking, father pulled that bud from my palm, shrouding petal tips with false tears that fell across the coffin with tenderness he had never before expressed. Solemnly, he kissed your lifetime of togetherness goodbye, bellowing loudly to join you before daybreak. It was one more promise he never meant to keep.

EPIPHANY FOR A BITCH

Through graying sighs of early morning light, watching your return from my unlit window, to see you balanced, awkwardly, in the arms of some errant moon-faced stranger, your legs splayed wide open, like a child's teeter-totter, impelled by northern wind. Muted whimpers rise to me, soon followed by your wild bellowing at unhearing sky. You, cat-woman, unseeing, faded scarecrow of every woman, mount the early morn with skirt awry; tugging, teasing, coaxing soundless seconds from your new day's unknown shadow man. Exhausted, spent, you slide back in guiltless silence under translucent clouds, waiting quietly, hungrily, to be covered in magic still to be dropped from a seamless, azure sky. Cat-woman, woman next door, night time bitch, day-time scarecrow, did you leave your dreams in an empty wine glass? You, who eagerly leave witness with two ghost pale balloons in dark celebration of your debauchery on dawn of awakening. Careless cat-woman, will you slip, unfeeling, uncaring, under another pale faced moon tonight?

(1)

michael-earle carlton



Michael-Earle Carlton began writing short stories at the age of 11. Her expressions of poetry soon followed. Readers are generally under the impression that her oeuvres are written by a male, but she is the mother of 3 adult sons. Although the majority of her poems are taken somewhat from true-life experiences, using poetic license of course; in person, she is completely opposite of the seriousness one presumes on reading her poetry. She's a light-hearted individual, with a weird, albeit warm, sense of humour, that is generally shared with friends, family, and those she newly meets along the path she has chosen as a writer.

She credits her love of writing to family genes, but insists there is no one true muse in her life, other than the small creature, Horace, a rather strange looking little canine, who is always to be found alongside her.

Michael-Earle is fully and totally devoted to writing, especially poems, and has devoted many hours to giving an assist to others who are also so inclined.

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Twiga by Ken Flynn

An interview with Kenneth Flynn, Metal Sculptor

by Grace Cavalieri



GC: *What triggered your need to create sculpture?*

KF: When I was quite young I tried some oil painting and sketching, but my eye always wondered what was on the “other” side. It seemed natural for me to drift to three-dimensional work and to “fill” my vision and curiosity.

GC: *Why do you choose to work in metal?*

KF: I was led to metal from two sources: First my oil painting instructor at a local college suggested he could see in my work a keen three dimensional quality and he suggested I sign up for a new metal sculpting course/studio which was to open next semester. Second: having learned the rudiments of welding while working in an industrial factory in New Jersey the art instructor peaked my interest.

GC: *What processes do you use?*

KF: Mostly my process involves oxygen/acetylene welding. Later in my career I also used Metal Inert Tungsten welding process.

GC: *What is the most gratifying part in completing an art form?*

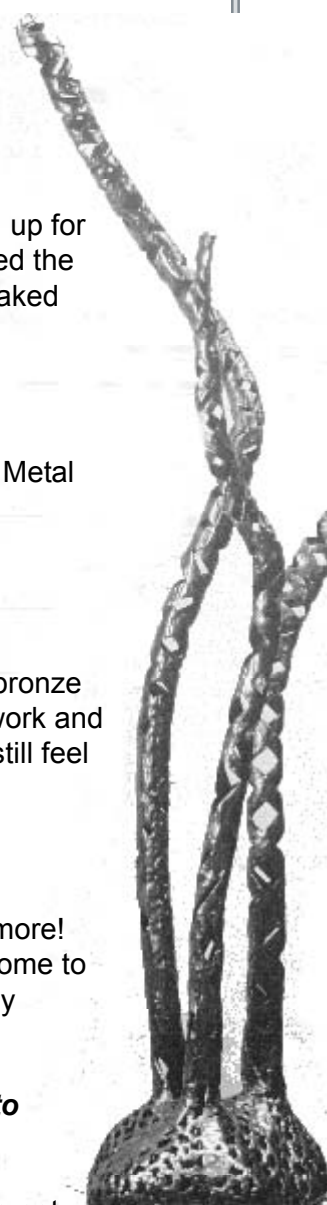
KF: The ability to walk around and see my work from infinite perspectives. I prefer to use bronze and I love to see it shine. No patinas for me! It is also thrilling to see visitors softly touch my work and wonder. I recently had a guest view one of my bronze works and suddenly burst into tears. I still feel quiet with wonder about that event.

GC: *What do you want from your art?*

KF: I need a couple of more lifetimes to complete my ideas and desires. I just want to do more! Yet, as I age and my body responds to the vigor of my chosen sculpting methods, I need to come to terms that I'll never finish all I wish to accomplish. I may have to rely on some sketches, so my children can know the direction I was attempting.

GC: *Most artists believe in cross-pollination of ideas. So, what advice would you give to writers?*

KF: This is a difficult area for me. I always, with few exceptions, have worked alone. I have not been an apprentice to other sculptors and their work, yet, for sure, I visit the showing sites and photographs. I have attempted to ensure my work was coming only from me and not from an outside influence. Having said that, I admit to being awed by other artists' work and certainly their efforts have influenced me to incorporate some of their vision or methods. For writers I would say, to read and appreciate all that's possible, but to create individually.



Grace Cavalieri

Grace Cavalieri entered the world of imagination through language. She never knew where she was other than inside a poem. Poet David Wagoner says "The forest knows where you are," so she described the trees and bushes and other sweet stuff around her. The questions she followed became a path. She saw innocence and returned to it. She wrote her first poem at age 8. It slanted down the page to the right. There were no lines. She preferred it this way. Communication was a calling out of the self and she heard the beauty of others. Writing became a vow to work. Collaboration with artists, composers, publishers, theater directors, technical geniuses became a world of the word. ...trying to recognize her own voice while listening to others, trying to tell the Truth ... what poet Bill Palmer calls: "saying the hardest things." Her poetry is quirky at times, a murmur, a howl. Her plays are an attempt to understand relationships — what one person wants from another, and what will be given in return. It's all been one beautiful spring of psychological action. A strong brave sculptor came to live with her in the forest. Children then came into the forest. They left it only when they could return again together.



Grace Cavalieri is still writing, answering the wrong questions, perhaps. There is a sign posted on the tree written by G.M. Hopkins, saying: for *what I do is me*. Looking back at life, it is always as if it just happened, is always just happening. Her recent book of poems (*What I Would Do For Love*), in the voice of Mary Wollstonecraft, 18th century author, is also being developed into a play. "Hyena in Petticoats" was given a stunning reading by the Xoregos Performing Company at the Public Library in New York City, and it is hoped this group will carry the play to completion. This was a great opportunity to tell how it feels to be a woman in the 1700's, struggling to work shoulder to shoulder with others, and not lose their love. It was the chance of a lifetime for Grace to speak from the heart, making Mary's experience transcend. Another wonderful opportunity with the Xoregos Performing Company was its reading at the Smithsonian Institution, "Quilting the Sun." This is the story of Harriet Powers, ex-slave who sold her cherished Picasso-like quilt for \$5.00, half the asking price. This play will premiere in South Carolina, 2007. It is about loss. Grace's new book of poems *Water on the Sun* was just issued by Bordighera Press in Italian and English translations. It was like living twice, hearing those poems read in another language. In these instances mentioned above, the word "collaboration" is a bell singing....ringing. Writing is lonely, but manifestation of material borrows light from elsewhere. MiPOES/AS has brought such light. There are women who gave as much as Mary Wollstonecraft and Harriet Powers, women like Didi Menendez who has harnessed the air, building a house in the forest for everyone to share. She made a way for voices to reach from here to there through space. And through the magic of energy, she lifts and changes until it touches. She is part of Grace Cavalieri's biography with the other women of history who release us from captivity. Friends are important to the arts. A friend published Hopkins only after his death. Friends matter. For, otherwise, we would never have heard these words: "For what I do is me/ For that I came."

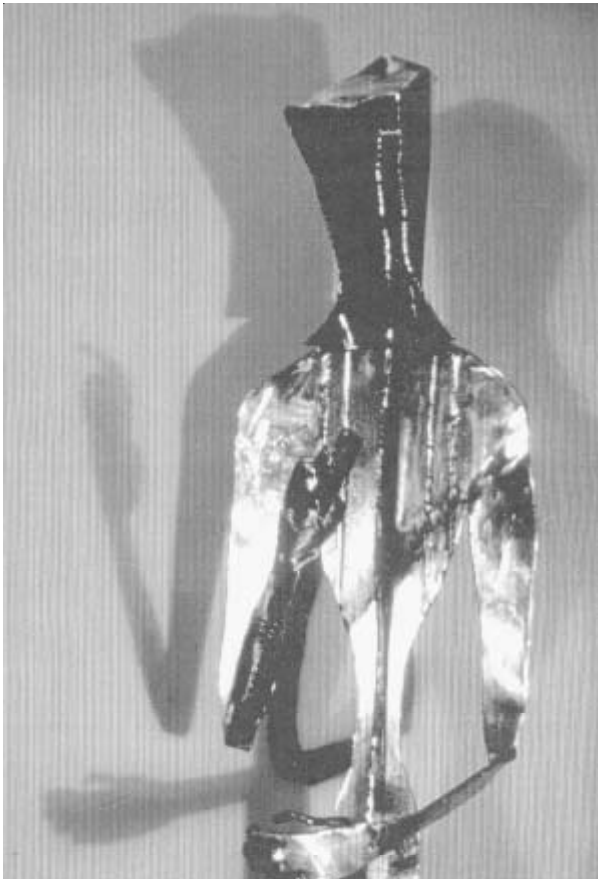


Photo of Grace with the Poet Laureate of the United States of America, Donald Hall.

Diego Quiros

An Inch of Time

Time. How inadequate we define it.
Every definition of time
has the word time in it.
Why not define it in meters, inches,
or miles of moonlight.

Why not define it by the amount
of faces swallowed by history,
or by the count of hearts we've broken.
Why mention time when defining time.

Take the hourglass,
sand falls a certain distance.
Time can be defined in grains of sand
multiplied by drop height.

Take watches and clocks.
Each hand travels a given circumference,
same round distance, repeatedly.
Time can be defined in laps per hand.

The Big Bang, the beginning of time,
is nothing but a pod of stars in a single chrysalis,
chrome butterflies released to infinity.
Soft petals of light flowing
through the fabric of god's blood, which is endless.

Destiny, the purpose of time,
is a dark haired Cuban woman
and she lies on my bed like a gift of vision,
a collection of strings and chimes
through smoking pyres of incense.

Our lips are an inch apart.
Where are you now
old withered hours.

Whispers of the Muse II

She recites full poems and titles,
she whispers words like "palladium"
while I'm dodging traffic.

She defines inkblots,
personality traits and emotional functions
while I'm sitting in the toilet.

She directs me to the scent of dried
withered roses and other things buried
between pages, while I'm handcuffed to the bed.

And by the time I drag the bedpost
to my desk, or tickle-wrestle for the key,
she flees untarnished by rejection.

I can never follow the motion of her
footsteps past a working pen, or trace
her lightning path to paper long after the flash.

That's why I'll never be a damn good poet,
my muse memory is an angel's robe.
Pure, white sinless virgin clean.
Invisible. Non-existent.

I blame only my lack of recollection
for all the words I've lost into the void,
all the words she softly said and I forgot.

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Diego Quiros started writing poetry to express his fully imaginative and distinctive understanding of the world, the self, the places, beliefs and fantasies that make the fabric of a person.

Diego is a difficult poet, sometimes drawing metaphors from pages lost in ancient literature or gods buried in old myths, sometimes exploring the singularities common in higher mathematics in his use of language, other times making connections to his collected interests, which range from fencing, to meditation, to melting glass. This gives his poetry a wide range of subject and ample room to express his most hidden transcendental yearnings.

He credits all his poetry to conversations with a Muse he describes as “a naked woman with long dark green hair, green eyes, and light green skin”. He claims she walks around his home in South Florida while he writes, and drops subtle whispers here and there.

Regardless of the source of inspiration, his body of work commonly explores subjects as loss, moments of ecstasy, the passing stare of a total stranger in the street, brief absences of inspiration, or even about the green Muse herself. Most of his poems carry a subtle trace of eroticism, which is the style he is known for. He cannot be classified as from a given school, or compared to a given period.

This description of his work will become evident in the poems to follow. Only one thing will become clear to you as a reader, his poetry will not unravel until the last line, and you will go back, at least once, to re-read the beautiful covenant written with a tinge of green, forged between the writer, the alphabet and you.

eating a late lunch

there's a wolf on my table
and he circles my plate
he howls Kansas moon monsters
I order fox meat and mud

The waitress brought her thighs
pencil tucked in
the cuff of her nylon days
she won't let you read
her eyes spell ghost men
phantom hands long behind
when she was 24
they held her hips
as rattle truck whales
cascaded movie screens of white
across motel matinee walls
outside road high stormy seaways
sharks with no fin
boats with no port

here in this rest stop
the men have guts blooming
in white t-shirts cradled
ulcers long time swallowed and
rolled over bacon stripped backwards
they yell and snore in one breath
if you look close at their beards
you see it's choke weed poison oak
that has grown into their faces
long since they've laid devil dimes down
and bet away the dove wings

this wolf on my table
he's licking my face
love bites my cheek
sniffs at my hair
with a low growl tremor
he tells me to reach
into my coat pocket

my left eye twitches
a man drops his spoon...

john korn



john korn is 27 years old & began writing poetry by recording his dreams at age 7. In 20 years notebooks fill a whole closet in his funky old apartment near the edge of pittsburgh. He loves ghosts & drugs & poetry. He is also an artist, both traditionally & with multimedia. Sometimes he looks like a nut & sometimes he is.



john korn

July 24th 2006

empty except for the girl

dry cleaning place close to where I work
has a drive thru window. I watched a girl
sitting there, reading a book.
she was wearing a green shirt.
her hair was long brown.
around 5 in the afternoon.
everyone was driving home.
I smoked a cigarette and stared at her.
her head down and her knees brought up to her breasts.
when I got to the other side of the building
I could see the back of her through the front door.
another angle. there were long rows of clothes
on hangers and covered in sheets of plastic.
I was dimly lit in there.
empty except for the girl.
it wasn't so much that I wanted to go and talk to her
it was more like I wanted to be the light
that puddled into the folds of her jeans.
or the silence in that place with the occasional sound
of a page turning every few moments.
the smell of the paper.
it really had nothing to do with the girl.
sometimes when viewing a scene it just seems so perfect
I want to exist in it without actually having
my presence there. I could be the room, the book
the girl, and the clothes all in silence.
a scene in time that knows what it is.
I finished my cigarette
and flowed
with the veins of traffic into a flood
of fragmented day dreams, car horns
radio voices, everyday... crowds of people
wishing they were somewhere and someone
else.

I floated in water today
on my back
looking up
and saw one plane pass over head
close to the ground
large
in the curve of
darkening blue sky
a miracle,
clouds like worn curtains.
my soul feels thin
those machines up there
and the people inside,
seemed unreal.
they were up there eating, drinking
and breathing, going somewhere
in a large metal cylinder with wings.
and I was down here in a small pool
in someone's back yard
north hills of Pittsburgh
my ears under the water
I heard nothing
and this was good
.

someone in that plane closer to the ground
could've looked out from his tiny window
and watched many backyards pass along beneath him
with many small pools and people in them.
the person on that plane might think of us all
down here as a group.
"those are the people in their pools" he might think.
"they are doing their thing together"
but he'd be wrong, because I was alone,
and it wasn't my pool,
and those other people in those other pools
in the very same neighborhood
were just as invisible and as far away
to me as this hypothetical
man in the plane.

and why does it have to be a man?
why couldn't the plane be full of young women
naked and bathing in a small pool of soapy water
scrubbing each other's backs.
how delightful to think
that the sky is full of naked young women
maybe one day
I'll figure out where
they land.

the number of people

I don't want to push
through the current
of this world.
the dizzy
engery of whatever
it is that has all these people
doing the sorts of things that they do
from spending money to get
a tan in some strange booth
to
shooting someone in the face.
hungry
running
trying to get one rung higher
on the strange concept
of some nonexistent ladder.
at the top
a suite and
the number of people
gathered inside this
particular room
will never equal
the amount outside
smashed up against
the widows and doors
so move on
better to be loved and close
to the earth
than to be another shallow fuck
trampling proudly on a five minute
glory stroll
through eden.



The Big Mirror

Polaroid pictures slip out
of my forehead
I keep them in a book
this one I took of you
by the Christmas tree last year
is now a picture of a goat
chewing purple grass
outside of a bakery
because that's how I choose
to remember it
time is a milkshake
thick up the straw
but runs through you
like warm water

this is how we spend our days
cold headaches
pixilated brains
filled with pixilated ideas
bouncing on tubes
and debated
my head's in a box
yours is in another box
the topic scrolls below on a ticker

commercial break
(do you sometimes feel alone?
why don't you have fun like them?
do you get tired at the end of the day?
do stressful things get you stressed?
do you sometimes look at dogs?
get a new car. vote for this man
he is better than that other man
that other man spits in your soda.)
the people all stand
in their roped off realities
they only let you in
if you have a camera

we are the stars of the show
we are stuck in stereo typical roles
we read our lines in our sleep
buy the dead beat box set trilogy
the special features include
a four hour documentary
about what kind of bran flakes
Syd Barrett ate and did it calculate
and contribute to his brilliancy
lets eat his hair
and pretend we are there
we can all be 60s manic depressives

we'll stare at ourselves
we'll wave to ourselves
we'll buy tickets to see ourselves



(11)

Photo booth portrait by Didi Menendez

Red Ones, Blue Ones

A trained corsetière,
my aunt measured
large breasts
small breasts
just blooming breasts
over the hill breasts
randy breasts
shy breasts
well used breasts
never been touched breasts.

At least once a week
she spoke of her dreams.
Balloons. Always about balloons.
Red ones blue ones white ones
all set adrift and rising until,
peak reached and deflating,
they fell to the earth in soft plops.
Like a late summer rain.
Like the sound of a boy's gasp
as he jerks off to a photo
bought for a buck.



Pris Campbell

Pris Campbell wrote her first poem in 1999. That wasn't when her interest in the written word began, however. At the tender age of eleven, she penned two plays for her sixth grade class to perform. By age fourteen, she'd begun writing a mystery novel, but the lure of friends hanging around the drugstore jukebox after school dragged her away from those early Sir Arthur Conan Doyle aspirations.

Books and poetry were part of her home life from the time she could read. After digesting all books of interest in her small-town one room library, she moved on to anything she could get her hands on, including a much passed around copy of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*—discovered and confiscated from beneath her mattress by her mother.

During her summer in Manhattan before grad school in those post-beat, not-quite-yet-hippie days, Ginsberg and *Howl* brought her back to poetry, only to lose it again in the grind of school, her later work as a Clinical Psychologist, and other blossoming interests. A six month trip in her 22 foot sailboat from Boston to Florida in the late seventies led to two articles in *Cruising World Magazine*, however, and a resurgence of her desire to write.

CFIDS felled her this time. For nine years, dizziness and other cognitive problems, in addition to unimaginably debilitating fatigue, were so heavy that even reading became impossible. When those symptoms finally began to improve, she wrote her first poem. Over time, she gradually regained her footing, continued to write, and poetry brought something back to her she feared had been lost forever: the gift of creativity. She has been especially moved by the writings of poets such as Li-Young Lee, Sharon Olds, Maya Angelou, Thich Nhat Hahn, Diane di Prima, Sylvia Plath, Louise Gluck, the prose of Alice Hoffman, so many of the older poets (Elliot, Whitman, the Brownings to mention four), and others too numerous to name individually.

Among other journals, she has published (or has poems pending) in *Mipo Publications* (digital/print/radio/OCHO), *Niedergasse*, *Boxcar Review*, *Verse Libre*, *Thunder Sandwich*, *MEAT* (S.A. Griffin, editor), *The Dead Mule* and *Tears in the Fence* (a U.K. print journal). She has one chapbook out, *Abrasions*, published by Rank Stranger Press and a second one, with Tammy Treacle, entitled *Interchangeable Goddesses*, will soon be published by Rose of Sharon Press. She lives in hurricane alley, otherwise known as Southeast Florida, with her husband, a dog and one impossibly crazy cat who walks over her computer keys and secretly writes at least half of her poems.



Sina Queyras

**blue
above
green
below
a glint
and
narrow
not a
fellow
in the
grass
but
longing**

Sina Queyras

SERIES LETTER #16

Dear Helen,

There is a little native boy outside my hut window. If I move more than two fingers around this pencil he will hear me and alert the tribesman. Last night I was able to bribe him with a piece of carob left over from the care package you sent. He allowed me to pace my room.

Tonight his smile faded when I had no mas. Now his marble eyes survey the walls outside, and I'm scared. He reminds me of our son. He has your spindly body, Helen. His caramel skin ashes like yours in the heat. I never understood how your body dried like a saladito. Remember when I begged you to sweat? Anyway, he reminds me of Douglas.

When I woke this morning my gut burned. I think it may be malaria, but I'm not sure. It comes in waves now. It must be ten degrees in here. I can see my breath over the words but this parchment is soaked in salt, so I know my body is broken.

Tell Douglas to paint me a picture and hang it over my workbench. Be sure he uses the entire canvas, you now how the white space drives me mad.

I can hear his eyes, Helen, the little native boy. I can hear him sniff at my movements. He has a broken foot, a fishing accident. He drags it when he walks, so I hear him shuffle, drag, shuffle, drag, all around the god damn perimeter.

I think about killing him sometimes. One of my hands could fit around his entire neck, Helen. I could be swift about it. Maybe when this full moon breaks and these crickets realize there is no audience for their orchestra. I don't know. It was just a thought.

I will write again in the morning.

William

Alveraz started writing poetry over the Summer of 2006

KITCHEN DISCO

boorland danced inside the refrigerator
like salmon over folds of whitewash

there was a peculiar stink of grape mold
with every stomp, rattle and slide

the burn in these moves pulled his
three hundred pounds across le' crisper

his teeth sealed with concise step
and mind bellied with forward thoughts

and the generals applauded so loud
and the dogs howled at pigeons

and his children bellowed his name
with the beat of one thousand drums

it spun he screamed in whirl fun
it spun he screamed in balance

the liquor spilled from every pore
and the lights hammered his hustle

and the dance of boorland was free again
he was ready to die like a man

alveraz
ricardez



Alveraz started writing poetry over the Summer of 2006 while watching his kids during the school break. He's a screenwriter by trade and typing scripts while chasing around rascals was not in the cards. He needed to keep the juices flowing at a condensed rate so he wrote poems between diaper changes and romps in the park.

The hobby eventually caught on with friends that suggested he show it around. He submitted the work to quite a few journals and magazines and was published in most of them. He then published a book through Kill Poet Press and is currently working through his second volume.

He is also a Buddhist, active Socialist Party member and volunteer at the Los Angeles Eco-Village. He firmly believes in bean curd, rice milk and wants to play for the Padres when he grows up.

He's been inspired by the following poets and suggests them to anyone taking on the world of verse. In no particular order; Albert Goldbarth, Rod McKuen, Carl Sandburg, Anis Shivani, Leonard Cohen, William Carlos Williams, Stanley Moss, Robert Pinsky, Richard Brautigan, Federico Garcia Lorca, David Semanki, Natasha Jusefowitz, Li Po, Li Ho, E.E. Cummings, Jason Bredle, Ernest Hemingway (yes, his poems), Tony Hoagland, Robert Vandermolen, Laura Kasischke, Erica Fielder.

weight of the running white

annmarie eldon

1

breasts milkful children grown and almost gone somewhere no doubt horses with their rumps to horse-doors which they don't know there's a word for bolted as if something from the blue

2

although breast milk is whiter than white like Cézanne's scratches in the too bright light not the filmy white or pearly white nothing mixy about breast milk as if it's on the boil always and bursting to come up in the pan whiter than white until it foams and escapes the huge pressure of the nipples

3

nerves too as if sucking is something horrendously universal as if all the world depended on its pressure this pain and still the horses stand with their rumps to doors all the wrong language as if also can be replicated over and over and over as if as if not a dream as if

4

not in a dream state but a good honest misplacement of choice why horse? why plural? as if one were not enough as a picture as if other pictures could fill in the blanks all the times waiting all the times alone all the empty arms and why many many arms as if two were not empty enough? and why rhetorical

5

when the answer is at hand arms hands a word at the fingertips all body parts co-joined by the limb the generic limb arm as if reaching and swimming and holding and dying were all the same yet arms don't rush legs do

6

and legs legs are pearly legs may be painted in shades of white a translucent or a zinc and never white but peach and grey and bruise and green and purple and the entire palette because legs ah legs

7

legs like Michelangelo's Adam skewed at a terrible angle simply to show off the torso a male torso twisted as if to give birth and pregnant with muscle and here the one horse turns too and shows a side rump which in horse terms has a word has has

8

the artist as moment-manager never late always on time painting emptiness the moment the entire empties not just the two arms waiting for fill and now two artists and more than one horse and too much filler and yet not enough

9

and it is possible to ejaculate and not orgasm you say and the world spins on a cue you early but not knowing of it and a gap opens and there time slips its hand into the event of your coming

10

and slows enough so that the horses lay down and graze in sudden fields mountain singular God winks as well as points and there's an ache less dull in the breasts than it was perhaps enough for the starving to creep into or seep, seep



annmarie eldon

AnnMarie Eldon began writing inside her head at a preverbal age of a few months old. As an identical twin she had entire conversations without her sister without even being able to speak. On essence writing remained internal until she was taught to write formerly at age 3. Her mother taught her reading and maths and her gypsy grandmother taught her to say the alphabet backwards.

As a young girl she was an avid reader of anything and everything: Superman comics, the dictionary, the family Bible dating from the early 1800s, the medical encyclopedia, and the newspapers. In post World War 2 Britain she was fortunate enough to have dedicated schoolteachers for whom teaching was a vocation. She kept meticulous lists of books read and books to read.

Her father had as a youth turned down a scholarship to Cambridge University and had been disowned by his family because he threatened to vote socialist. He walked from the north east of England to London and got a job as a waiter, meeting people such as Lawrence of Arabia and George Bernard Shaw. He had a photographic reading skill and was avid reader of science fiction, often reading book pages with one glimpse and in random order.

Life was very poverty stricken in a tiny "two up two down" house with one coal fire and cold water and an outside toilet. But there would be piles of books that the neighbors would bring and her father would recycle books at a vast rate. Both parents continued to work at the local British Small Arms factory after the war and by age 4, before school began, AnnMarie could use a micrometer (a small hand held device for measuring the thickness of the barrel of a gun) and a slide rule for logarithms.

The school exam system was strict – literature and writing held highly above most other subjects. She won her first poetry prize aged 9 for a poem about a squirrel. It began: "a little golden head I saw, a bouncing tail, a tiny claw, leaping and jumping to and fro, out to gather acorns." It was said the poem won specifically because the final line of each verse was designed purposefully not to rhyme to mimic the gait of the climbing squirrel.

She attended a grammar school and won further poetry prizes. She went onto Art School to study painting and writing took more of a back seat. One project however found her writing a complex, lengthy word piece to describe an object rather than doing a detailed picture. She went to university to study psychology and then onto gain qualifications in psychotherapy. There were the inevitable fallow years for poetry when career, marriage and children took precedence.

Working for many years in the corporate world helping to turn decision makers into human beings she believes one of the greatest blessings in life is listening. She lives reclusively in picturesque Oxfordshire where she knows of writing programmes. She admits to being a lazy reader of others' poetry, confining most of her input to editing an online poetry forum. She considers herself to be an Internet poet, eschewing the hard copy for ecological reasons. She does however have many hundreds of books, some old and rare, in her home, from where she reads everything from theology to science.

She and her daughter share the gift of being able to dowse and she has taught her daughter to say the alphabet backwards. She retains a telepathic relationship with her sister but can no longer use a micrometer or slide rule. She has written thousands of poems and is best found googled and at her blog www.annmarieeldon.blogspot.com

Ron Androla

Ron Androla started writing poetry very early in his life. He has never stopped, for better or for worse. He was 15 years old when he read *NAKED LUNCH*, and although the savageness of the book intrigued him, he was still in a phase of writing sappy love poems. When he went to Point Park College he took a creative writing course, and because of the many drugs available in 1972, his work became dark, schizophrenic, and delighted his professor. Since he was more interested in writing dope poems than studying, he was failing most of his classes. His professor (Dr. Sam Sipe) took him aside & said "look, you shouldn't be here", and suggested he pursue his writing talent at a college more appropriate. So he switched colleges and found himself in the mountains of New Hampshire at Franconia College where the poet Robert Grenier was his poetry professor. Grenier was only 27 at the time.

Ron found himself drawn to the Black Mountain writers. He corresponded with the poet Larry Eigner, who was very gracious as Ron struggled with the "intellectuality" & "biology" of poems. Grenier brought up the idea he'd approve an independent study program, that all Ron had to do was choose any place on Earth, hole up, & commit his time to typing, typing, typing. So the island of Corsica became Ron's destination where that's what he did, type, type, type, anything & everything, nothing else mattered. He lived on oranges & french bread & chicory coffee for three months in a 3rd floor room at the Hotel Spunta Di Mare on the other side of the bay from the city of Ajaccio. Upon his return to The States, and after a semester of living the life of a hermit with a typewriter, Franconia College was falling away due to financial troubles, and eventually closed down.

Ron found himself back living with his parents in a tiny boro named Ellport in Western Pennsylvania. He got a job at a factory driving a jitney to have money for beer & marijuana -- his father even remodeled an attic room into a masterful writing-room where Ron found sanctuary, and more poetry, more & more reflecting his own "voice". His writing was evolving. He was driving jitney, drinking at Oak Grove Inn with the Ellport Gang, shooting pool, listening to LOUD Pink Floyd & Led Zepplin, but things happened: he had to make an escape & moved to College Park, Maryland with a girl he knew from Point Park days, who had also been to the Switzerland Campus the same time Ron flew there, so they were friends. He wrote on the end of a large diningroom table, worked temporary jobs, & even went so far as to schedule a meeting with Reed Whittemore at the University of Maryland, where his friend was doing Graduate work. Reed wasn't very receptive to Ron's stuff, and Reed was like the King of Poetry at the university, but Ron found a bookstore with Small Press magazines from the D.C area, & submitted what he'd been writing at that diningroom table. Again, things were in chaos, Ron's father had a second heart-attack, so Ron returned to his hometown. The girl he was living with forwarded the letters of acceptance from the magazines he had sent work to, and Ron was hooked, and became active in the Small Press "scene" of the late '70's. He got a State job working at the Ellport Sewage Treatment plant with his friend Greg as his boss. While Greg napped Ron wrote in notebooks. He'd bring the increasing array of magazines & books that came in the mail to work.

to be this blessed

18 years my ex-wife
grew to despise my escape
into writing. i'd close
the door to my writing-room
& most of the times she
wldn't enter — crank
6-speaker stereo system
loud over her screaming
in another room of our
house. she grew to hate
music i listened to then.
we weren't close to compatibility.
she played pop country songs.
she called me a city-boy.
we both came from very small
towns in western pennsylvania,
but i had changed into a city-boy.
she certainly fueled my writing.
she didn't understand my writing.
she rarely commented on the books
i was doing pre-internet years.
long pony-tail hair & castro beard.
she got pissed about my drinking too.
my face in a plate of cold scrambled
eggs at 2 in the afternoon in the kitchen
after joe & i had finished 3rd shift
& drank & drank until my face
squished in a plate of scrambled eggs.
she wasn't happy. writing balanced the
shit — lovelessness, powers of the word.
& as impending divorce chewed at my life
poetry became a saving grace — i just
had internet access. then ann suddenly
blooms inside my brain after 23 years
via a phone. it was pure karma magic,

timing, serendipity. still is.
she reads everything i write.

we rarely, if we ever have,
fight. we are the balance

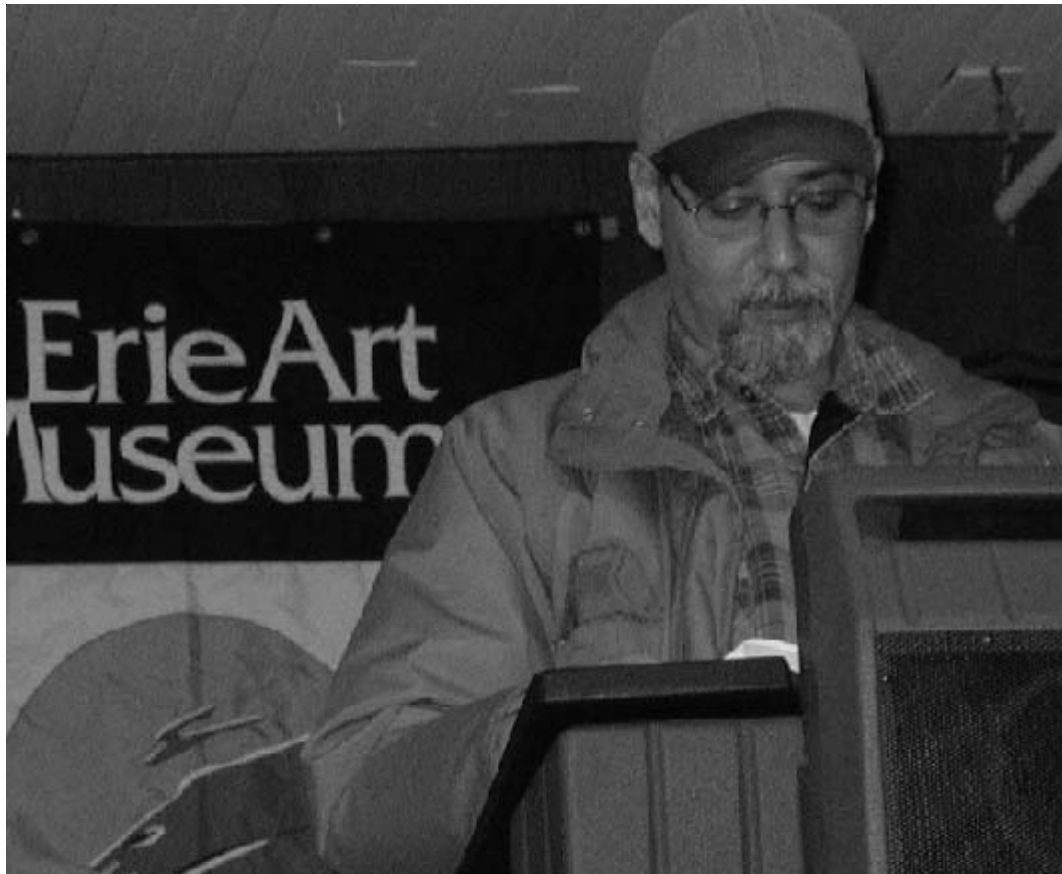
of me, love,
the weight of happiness

is actually
weightless.

i am soaring into old
age with a wife who
loves me,
who knows i'm
a poet &
likes that
condition.
she is the source
of all inspiration,
of all secret meanings,
of reality.

Ron Androlas's poems were regularly published in GARGOYLE, BOGG, & ABBEY, issue after issue, with good reactions. The State funding ran out, and Ron found employment at a strip-bar in a neighboring town as a bartender. It was all pretty shady & sometimes sick. Ron was a loaded bartender. As usual, Ron needed to get away fast, & with a pregnant girlfriend in a borrowed station-wagon with a drain-pipe for an exhaust-pipe, drove cross-country with his books & papers strapped under a blue tarp on the top of the vehicle. Clothes and books and paper packed in the car, it took 6 days to reach Seattle. Friends from the bar had relatives living there, that's who the station-wagon belonged to. The brother of Ron's friend helped find Ron a job at a ladder factory. Ron's daughter Rachel was born in Auburn, a few miles from Seattle. By then a network of magazines were publishing Ron's material. Ron had a corner in the bedroom. Nine months after the birth of his daughter, and by then married, and realizing being nearer to family was for the best, Ron moved his family back to Pennsylvania, and he settled in Erie, where his sister and her new husband lived.

He found a cheap flat & his brother-in-law got him into a plastics shop, where his brother-in-law was a foreman. It was an insane little shop, with lots of drinking & drugs a routine. Ron had an entire room in the flat for his writing-room, & Ron was a madman, long-haired, bearded, red-eyed, working 6, 7 day weeks for enough money to survive at a basic level. He found the Beats, Bukowski, & he was still a fan of the Existentialists. He found power in the slavery of the job, skimming poverty, and decided to produce his own small press magazine which he titled NORTHERN PLEASURE. Bukowski submitted upon request, and the word got out, Ron's mailbox was soon full of work from writers all over the world.



He's unclear how or why it happened, but he received a letter from the Director of the Erie Art Museum, asking to participate in a reading there. Ron's poetry was fairly radical, explicit, raw, and much to his delight he met other local poets who shared Ron's addiction to writing. Ron had many chapbooks published by various independent publishers. With the poet Paul Weinman, they collaborated on the production of 15 spoof chapbooks in under a 2-year span. In 1994 Ron was a "steering committee" member of the first Underground Press Conference held at DePaul University in Chicago. He had read at various venues in Erie, Pittsburgh, Kent, Dearborn, Buffalo, D.C., mostly always with his Poetry Bodyguard, Bart Solarczyk, and they shared many poetry adventures together. By 1997 Ron's work was "known" in the realm of pre-internet days, those paper years, but then came the tragedy of divorce after 18 years. Ron lived on half-gallons of Jim Beam alone in the house he stopped making mortgage payments on, and was an utter mess, but he had webtv & internet access, & found it a fantastic energy where he was met most openly with the poet Michael Mcneilley, like the birth of the internet, when, out of the blue, he answered the phone and Ann's voice was on the other side. Ron met Ann at Franconia College, they lived in his dorm room together, but when Ron went to Corsica, Ann didn't wait for him. He was insanely in love with her. She broke his heart. 18 years of silence and she's on the phone, a month after his wife and kids left. Pure Karma Fate, the circle of Love. Ron and Ann are now happily married in a rented house and live as rapidly aging people in Erie, Pennsylvania with 2 cats & one large dog. His son Doug is now 21. His daughter Rachel will soon turn 27. He has 3 grandchildren. His 242 page book, POET HEAD, SELECTED POEMS 2001-2005, published by Rank Stranger Press, has not won any awards. Most of his 40-some chapbooks have long been out of print.

Ron remains underground. The underground, where he feels most comfortable out of secure habit. He is very visible on the internet, and the original "Ron Androlas's Pressure Press" messageboard website designed by Mcneilley, was quickly revived by the grace of Bill Beaver in 2001 after the untimely death of Michael Mcneilley, where Ron has been writing continuously, along with a core group of around 100 other poets & lurkers. The site is nearing 200,000 hits. Most all the work is archived. It is a massive cyberspace place. It is daily life for Ron and Ann.

Robert Bohm

Without Her

Where the sunstruck snowfield ends and the trees
begin, deer tracks
follow the woods' edge north until

a half mile ahead

they curve west, away
from where the old plastics factory, its
windows boarded up, still stands, although

a quarter of the roof' is caved in and birds
flit in and out. No

nostalgia here, no
ghost-machines rattling as they produce
switch boxes, no
longed-for voices grousing during cigarette break
about the new pastor at

St. James Methodist. The deer, not
free of all this, are
wherever the tracks lead, probably

the bottom of Nettle Hill
in the dense stretch of woods abutting
Long Bridge Rd. No

hiking in that direction now, though. The cold's
too perfect here. In the sub-
division beyond
the ruined building, the houses

have seen better days. Geese
squawk in the graying sky. It's

starting to snow again. Almost
a foot's predicted. I love
a new storm's beginning, the way

the wind picks up and you know how
by nightfall the snow will be
piling up an inch an hour and no

tracks, of anything, will be left
to follow, just
the white and dark of snow and objects in
an immensity
the mind, risking everything,
finally occupies.

No matter what your parents say, remember this

for Che Prasad and Anand

Like breaking off part
of a sentence

in order to possess
the entirety

of the fragment's
meaning, I snapped

the lilac flower from
the branch

the day
my daughter was born. Only then

dislocated
did the full

weight of it become
factual in my hands. For

a few seconds afterwards
bewildered

I didn't
move, the flower's

weight anchoring me to more
than thoughts

of the child, just as
(as hinted

at above)
a sentence fragment, jaggedly

solid in its
incompletion, can

show us, with
what's left of its mass after

the dismemberment,
the enormous weight

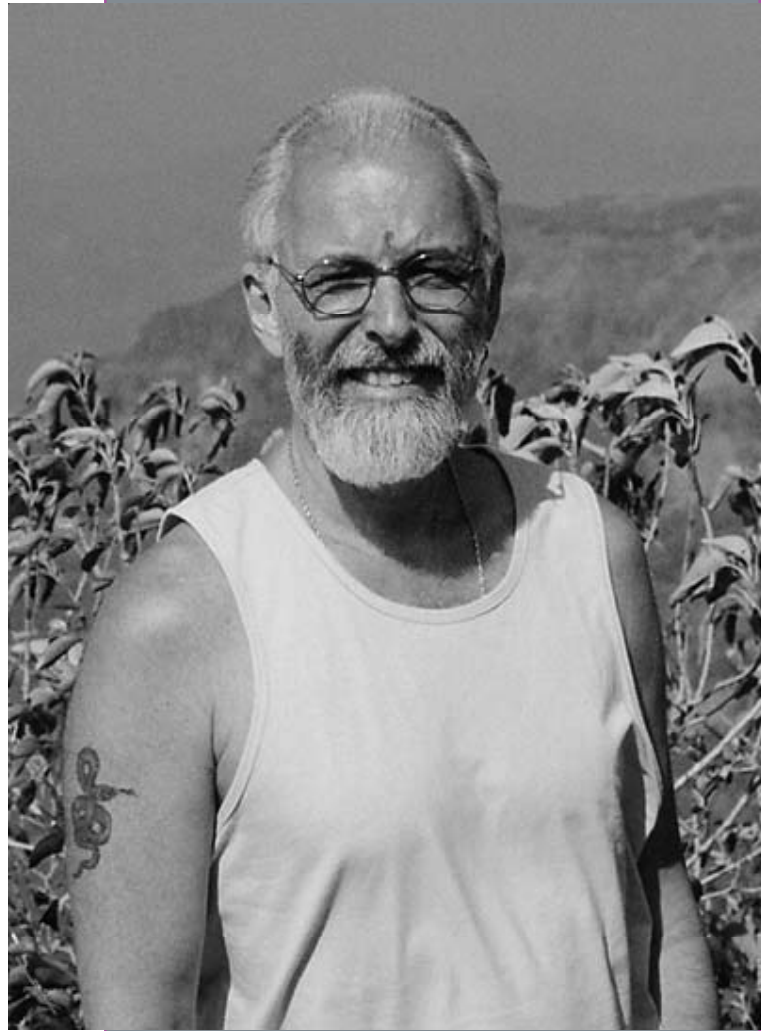
of things like no
rigid grammar ever can.

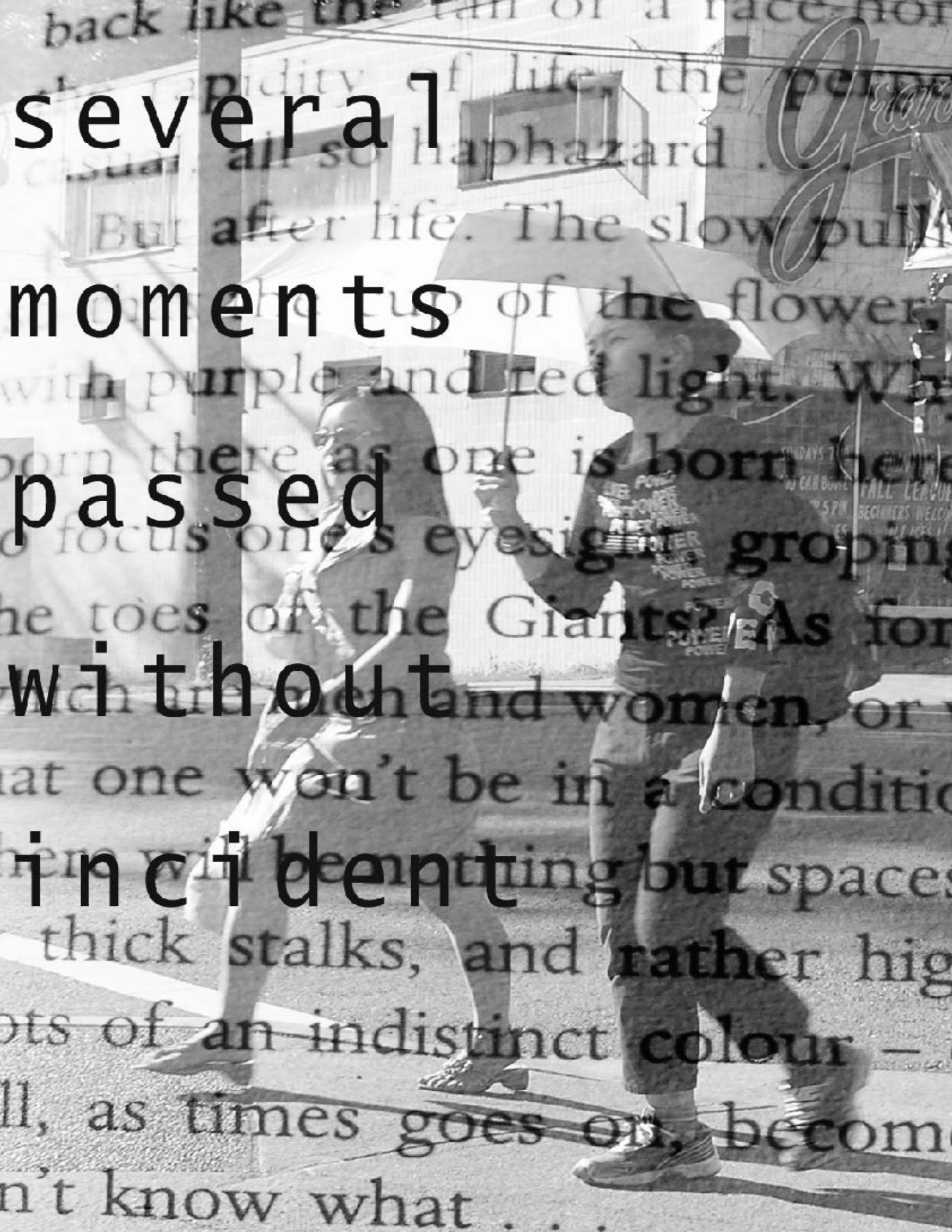
To Lynn

The fir behind the Exxon station
made no decision to take root there, it just did. Like Brooklyn
took root in Mickey when he woke up
in a crackhouse near the El the night before going straight for good.
Further south, a river, with PCB's buried in its bank, is
the world's last emotion winding toward culmination.
Tonight Shane told me, "There are people who'll still
persecute a man for growing
a Castro beard or wearing dreadlocks."
In response, Adriana patted the baby while outside
the dog barked in moonlight as if it sensed
a sniper, perched on a coneflower petal, taking aim
at the wisdom of survival.
No flowers now, though, it being winter.
In the morning, women and men will traipse past the time clock
into the autoplant.
All of this belongs where it is:
in the poem.
Evoking a thing, even something mundane as the day
Mother Teresa's menopause began, teaches us the value of wasting time.
Lou's sister Isabella first showed me where it said:
"This isn't hell, but a street.
Not death, but a fruitstand."
I visited my dad's grave a few weeks ago.
The groundskeeper smiled when he saw me drinking beer.
The next morning on E. 53 St.
I watched a man empty a syringe full of sunlight in his arm.
"Which way is Brooklyn?" someone now interrupts
the poem's evolution from above to here.
The answer's easy: from Prince and Thompson, drive southeast
to the bridge, cross it and keep going until you come to where
the bearded lady once danced with Lydia's husband Al.
If poetry's just another way to hide,
why write it?
It isn't, which is why I'm composing this for you
who are too young to be my mistress, yet are.
Still, when we fuck, no matter
how expertly you convulse, it's
Anna's sweaty body bumping under me, not yours.
A self-taught necrophiliac, I saw in you from the first
a grave in which a corpse waited for my cock.

Robert Bohm is a poet and culture writer. He was born in Queens, NY. His new chapbook, *Uz Um War Moan Ode*, will be released soon by Pudding House Press. His other credits include two books, one chapbook and work published in a variety of print and online publications. More information about Bohm, as well as excerpts from new as well as older writings, can be found at his website, *Unburials: The Writer as Graverobber*.

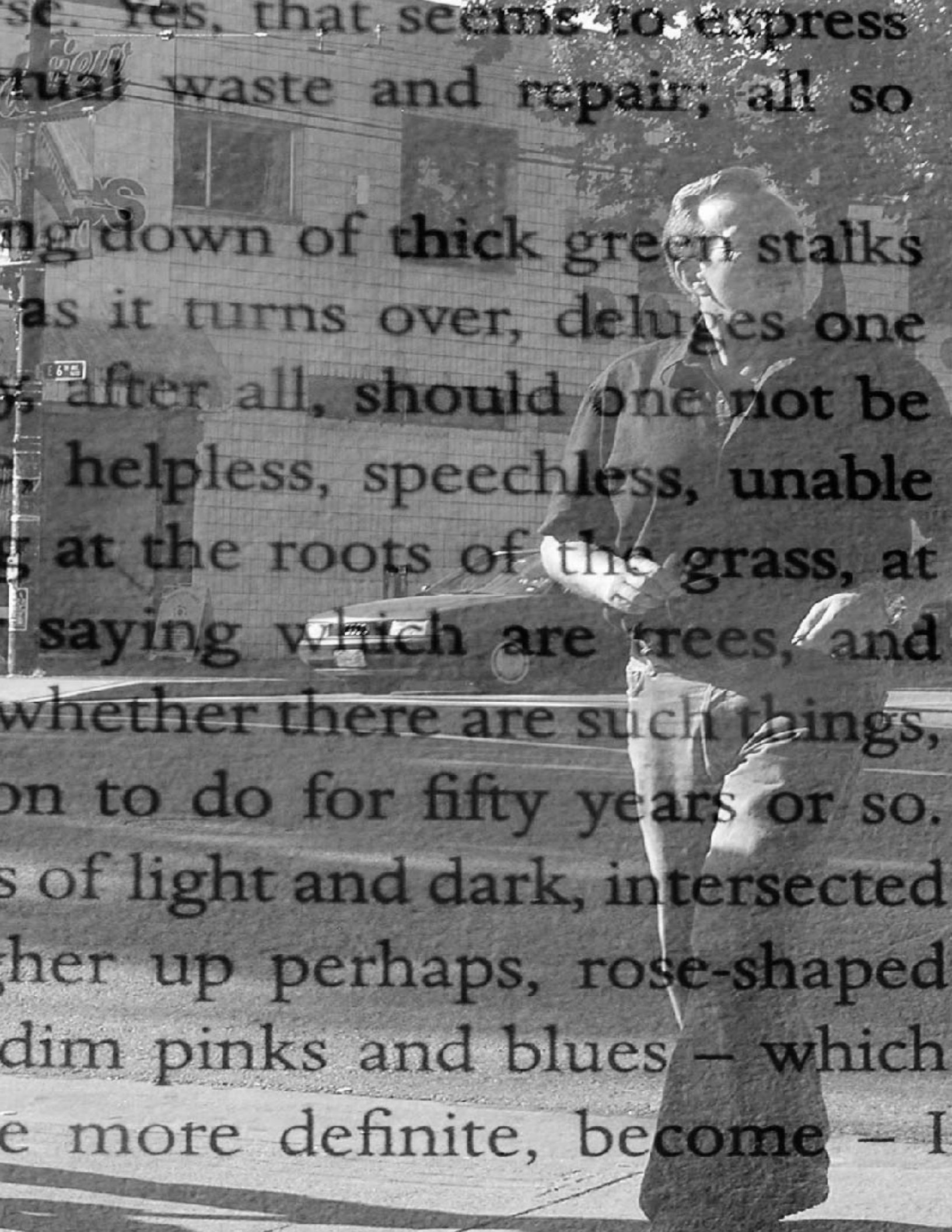
OCHO
OCHO
OCHO
OCHO





several
moments
passed
without
incident

sc. Yes, that seems to express
tual waste and repair; all so
ng down of thick green stalks
as it turns over, deluges one
; after all, should one not be
helpless, speechless, unable
g at the roots of the grass, at
saying which are trees, and
whether there are such things,
on to do for fifty years or so.
s of light and dark, intersected
gher up perhaps, rose-shaped
dim pinks and blues – which
e more definite, become – I



Bob Marcacci

plum

in our palm
dark purple
so like
the hidden
part of you
its taut skin
faintly flecked
with small
whitish or
off-white
speckles

where a stem
was once now
only a hole
or some kind
of black eye

we bought
a bagful

later on too
much later
we bite
into one
the veiny
flesh deeply
red and so
juicy we
even suck
the seed

saint

wake up each morning
think
this misery is greater than any other
mope in morning coffee mud
share stares with the expressionless
clock who can hold out longer
give up eventually
there are things to do today
to suffer
in search of failure
find excesses
in the plethora of mundane stuff stuff
the sack big enough for a person
with garbage and recycleables
who needs prayer
appeals to heaven have gone unanswered
wasted years to die
finally
without family friend or lover
who remembers

A thought lasts as long as it takes to make it to the next station,
after which i must

get off and make my way to the next train where a new thought
may begin.

This contemplation of days and months and years
in between points,

a list of our things
as I think through it, swayed
by the nudges of transit,

I try to climb for some
perch, in my mind,
held in check with intoxicating stale air and human din of speech
in a train-car filling with people and heat.

I can't move now,
holding my book as if it were my gift,
our random page
marked with the words of someone or other
(who reads this stuff anyway).

Someone over my shoulder who doesn't understand
this poem or this story

in a foreign language,
tries to read a reaction in my face,
in my stance,

jostling for a position near the closing
doors,
uncertain.

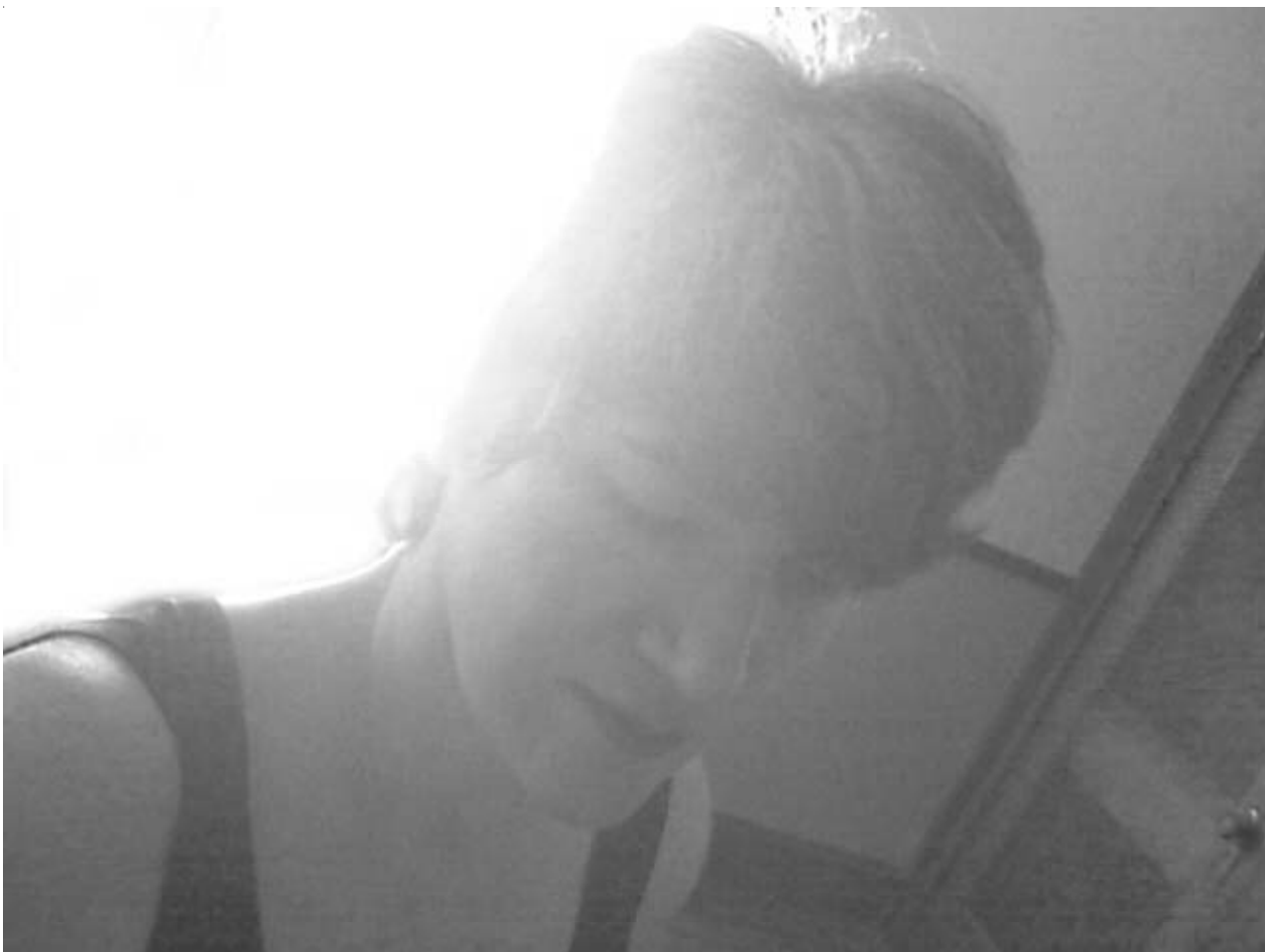


California Vacavillian presently living and writing in Beijing, China. He is Host of the International Literary Open Mic every Wednesday evening at The Bookworm in Beijing, member of the multilingual poetry group Subterraneans, and MiPoesias PJ for THE COUNTDOWN.



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Sina Queyras' most recent collection of poetry, *Lemon Hound*, was published by Coach House Books in 2006. Last year she edited **Open Field: 30 Contemporary Canadian Poets**. She is contributing editor to *Drunken Boat* and co-curator of Belladonna reading series. This year she is visiting professor at Haverford College. Next year she is writer-in-residence at the University of Calgary. She wears a cape whenever possible and keeps a blog: lemonhound.blogspot.com. Her contribution are the two visual poems in OCHO #8.



Didi Menendez
publishes, edits
and designs
OCHO.